

Ears and a Tail

by BridgeBetweenReality

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Summary: May wakes up 6000 km away from home, In a *slightly* different body. Read: the body of a panther. (OC X Avengers)

1. Chapter 1

****I own my OC May *more information on my account page*, Marvel owns the rest. ****

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****May's POV****

The first thing I noticed was that I had a burning headache. _'Where am I?' _I thought, but I couldn't remember. The more I tried to think, the more my head was pounding. The next thing I noticed was a smell. The smell of trees, and grass, andâ€| _people. Many people._ I slowly started to open my eyes, blinking a lot because of the bright light. '_Okay, I'm outside. That's a start.' _Once my eyes had grown custom to the sun, I looked around. Though I couldn't remember being there before, I knew exactly where I was. The trees with the large buildings behind them gave it away. I was in Central Park, in New York. In other words, I was around 6000 km away from home. Slowly but steady, memories started to flood in. _'I was on a holiday, here in New Yorkâ€| With some friendsâ€| But why was I still here?' _I tried to get up, only to find that I couldn't. I was only able to get on my knees, in a crawling position. Still woozy, I crawled towards the noises that I heard. I felt awful. When I finally reached a path, I walked *crawled* up to some people, asking for their help. The reaction they gave me was the last thing I expected.

They got pale like they saw a ghost, and ran off screaming. _'Hey, what did I do?!' _I thought. This attracted the attention of everyone else around. Everyone had the same reaction. Some grabbed their phone, and called 911 in panic. _'What's going on?' _I thought, but I couldn't get the words over my lips. I kept crawling around in the

hope to find someone who wouldn't run off when he saw me, but in vain. After a couple of minutes I heard something behind me. Before I could turn around, I felt a prick in my back, then everything went black.

oOoOoOo

I woke up again, in pretty much the same circumstances. Only this time I could remember more, and I didn't feel as woozy while waking up. I was here because the plane had been overbooked, and one person on the plane had to stay behind for a day. I had volunteered, and had stayed here for one more day. I looked around again, and was shocked to find myself in a zoo. Nothing wrong with a zoo, of course, but when you're _inside of the animal residence, _well, I just don't know why. Right now, I was desperate for answers. Once again, I tried to get up properly, but once again I failed. '_Okay, that's it, What is going on?' _I thought and looked down to my body.

'_Well fuck. Now I see why people ran from me.'_

I looked down to a black, shiny fur. _'Great. I'm a panther. That's just marvellous. But would someone tell me HOW THE FUCK I BECAME A GODDAMN PANTHER?! BECAUSE THE LAST TIME I CHECKED, I WAS HUMAN, WAS WEARING CLOTHES, AND WAS- â€| Walking in Central Park. Great. So I had been there before.' _Looking around again, I saw the people on the other side of the fence. But I ignored them. Instead, I focussed on my direct surroundings. There were some trees, rocks, and a puddle of water. I went to the latter, and looked at my reflection. Sighing internally, I stared at my face. I still had the same grey-green eyes, but that wasn't going to help me in any way. _'I have to let them know that I don't belong here' _I thought. And that was exactly my plan. Because on the outside I may look like a panther, but on the inside I was definitely more. '_So commence the plan Let's Get The Fuck Out Of Here. I'll think of a shorter name another time.' _

I walked towards the fence, and people turned towards me immediately. A little boy pointed at me and said: "Papa, look! A tiger!"

The man next to him laughed, and said: "Almost right. That's a panther kiddo."

"Ooh, cool! Can we go see it papa? Up close?"

"All right, but be careful, all right? Don't go stand against the fence. Because no matter how pretty she is, she can be dangerous."

I chuckled in my head. _'I'm not dangerous, I'm as human as you. I'll show you..'_

The kid walked towards the fence, but did as his father had said and stayed back a few steps. Meanwhile, I slowly walked to sit right in front of the kid. His eyes widened as I looked directly into his eyes, and he quietly said: "H-hiâ€|"

I nodded in response, and his eyes even grew bigger. _'Aw, he's so adorable!' _I thought. He just stared at me, still a bit shocked, so I decided to pull out the big guns. I started to purr. I walked a bit closer, and stroked my back against the fence. The man next to him looked in awe, as the kid asked: "Dad, I think she wants me to stroke her. Can I?"

"Rather not, kiddo. You never know if she's dangerousâ€|" he said uncertain.

'_Aw, c'mon! Let the kid pet me! I need the attention!_' _So I laid down on my back and started to roll. You know, the way you see those adorable kitty's do in YouTube videos. Then I got back up and stroked my side against the fence again, purring louder while doing so.

"Does she look dangerous to you?" the kid asked his father.

The man sighed, and said: "You know what, I'll pet her first, to see if she lets me, and if it's safe, you can pet her as well. Deal?"

'_Yes!_' _I thought, and the kid nodded. His father moved closer, until his hand rested against the fence. It was too big to go through, so I leaned against his hand and let him stroke me with the fence between his hand and my fur. I purred even louder, and the man *finally* told his son that it was okay.

"But be careful, Tyler. 'Kay?" _'Huh. Tyler. So that's his name.'"_

He walked towards my shoulder, and laid his hand against the fence just like his father had done. But instead of leaning into his touch, I gave his hand a small lick and pressed my head against it. "Dad! She licked me!" he laughed, and began to pet my head. His hand was small enough to go through the fence, so petting me was a lot easier for him.

That was when the other people started to notice me more, and soon a circle had formed around them. Some other kids stood next to Tyler, and one of them said: "Pfsh, it's just a stupid tiger."

I looked the kid in the eye, and hissed at him. "It's a panther, idiot" Tyler said, and I nodded. The sound of surprise went through the crowd, and Tyler quietly asked: "W-wait, can you really understand us?" I looked him in the eye, and nodded without breaking eye contact.

"AWESOME!" he yelled. If I could, I'd laugh at his outburst. _'Yeah, awesome, until you see it from my point of view.' _That was when I heard a man call to the press. Of course, the story of an English-understanding panther was a huge catch, and within the hour, photographers were all over the place, taking pictures of me and filming a woman's explanation of how they'd found me.

But I didn't pay attention, I was figuring what to do next. _'Okay. So, this has to be some kind of magic, right? Or maybe mutation. I need to reach someone who knows something about that. Or at least about strange things like this.' _An idea suddenly popped into my head. I didn't know if they would be able to help me, but I had heard some rumours about them, especially after the battle in Manhattan a couple of months ago. My eye fell on a branch, and I internally grinned at the thought of how much this was going to look like How To Train Your Dragon. I took the branch in my mouth, and tilted my head to write in the dirt. The attention of the cameras immediately got from the woman to me, and the crowd gasped as they started to see

letters forming on the ground.

It was one simple word, but It would better be enough to get me out of here. When I was done, I sat down *a bit proud of my not too messed up handwriting*, next to the initials that spelled a simple word.

SHIELD.

2. Chapter 2

****May's POV****

The press had been sent away not long after I had written my message on the ground. The personnel of the Zoo had been completely shocked, and had put me back inside, in my kennel. I laid on the cold ground as I suddenly picked up a new scent, a woman's scent. I heard footsteps approach immediately after, and turned around as they reached me and stopped in front of my kennel.

Two women stood there, one I recognised as a staff member. The other one was new, she had brown hair tied together in a knot, and wore a uniform. I saw a logo on her chest, and internally sighed in relief. I recognised it as the SHIELD logo.

"Thank you Helen, I can take it from here" the woman said to the staff member that had brought her here. When she had left, the brown haired woman turned to me and said: "Hi there. My name is special agent Maria Hill. I'm here to take you to SHIELD."

****Maria Hill's POV****

It was strange. Fury had sent me to pick up a black panther that had written SHIELD. At first I had thought that it had just been a trick, an animal trained in the circus. But Fury wanted to make sure that it was nothing special. So I had to pick her up, but now that I saw her, her facial expression surprised me. It was so human. She looked genuinely happy when I said I was from SHIELD and was here to pick her up. I opened her kennel "Helen, the Zoo keeper, had given me the key- and held up a collar and a chain. She held up her nose in disapproval, and I chuckled lightly.

"Sorry, but I have my orders." I could almost hear her huff, but she slowly came closer. When she sat in front of me, I kneeled and gently put on her dark blue collar. I attached the metal chain, and gently started to lead her to the door. I glanced to her from time to time, and always saw one expression on her face: worry. It was always the same; in the car, in the plane, and when we had arrived on the helicarrier.

"_Hill" _Fury's voice disturbed my thoughts. _"Have you arrived yet?"_

"We're on our way to the bridge now, sir" I responded.

"_Good. Fury out."_

I looked back to the panther walking next to me, and laid my hand on her head, caressing her gently. "Relax" I said quietly, and looked at

her. She looked back at me, and I saw the tension disappear a small bit. It wasn't much, but it was a start. So while walking to the bridge, my hand rested on her head. After a while, I heard her slowly starting to purr. '_Hmm, she likes me.' _

When we arrived at the bridge, I walked to Fury with her. "Sir" I said, "this is her."

He turned around, and I felt the panther tense up again. Fury nodded at me, and then looked at her. "I am Director Fury," he said, "I'd ask you for your name, but we don't have any dirt to write in." She had an amused expression on her face, as she tapped her paw five times on the ground. Fury lifted his eyebrow, and said: "Does your name start with an E?"

She shook her head. "Okay, but why five?" I asked. She moved her hand to my arm, and started to push my watch with her nose. Fury frowned, but she kept on tapping five times with her paw and pointing to my watch. After thinking for a moment, I suddenly got it. "Ooh, I see, it's May, isn't it?"

The panther -ehm, May- nodded, and Fury nodded as well.

"Okay, so we've got your name. _First _name, at least. Now, I want to know why you are here."

****May's POV****

'_Pfish, where to start' _I thought, and huffed. I thought I heard Hill snicker, so looked up at her, and saw a small grin on her face as she looked down on me. _'Okay. They know my name. That was the easy part. Now I have to tell them that I was on a trip, as a human, and suddenly woke up as a panther. And that I just hoped that they'd be able to help me. Just a random guess. Great. That's just f***ing amazing.' _

I looked up at Fury, and he said: "How about we guess, and you nod or shake your head. If you don't know, you turn your head."

I nodded, and he started asking questions.

"Are you naturally an animal?" I shook my head.

"So you're human?" I nodded.

"And do you know what turned you into a panther?" Again, I shook my head.

"Are you here because you want us to help you figure out?" I nodded fiercely and stood up. _'Yes! Thank Goodness, he's smart!'_

"Do you remember anything that could give us a start?" I tried to remember as much as possible, but nothing new popped u- wait. A shadow. I had opened my eyes after I had changed and had seen a shadow! Only briefly, and I had passed out immediately after, but I remembered something. And a smell as well. And I was sure that I would be able to recognise it again. So I nodded, and touched my nose.

"You remember a scent?" he asked, and I nodded again.

"Well, it doesn't give us the biggest head start, but at least she'll be able to identify him, her or it if we have a clue, and something with a scent" Hill said. "You think you can do that?" She asked, and looked at me.

I nodded, and she smiled. Fury was about to say something else, before he got cut off by a new voice.

"Fury, I can't believe it! After all the times you've told me you're not running a circus, you bought yourself a panther. You know, I can arrange some clowns if you want."

"I think our clown just walked in" he said, and stared at him. I started to laugh, what actually was recognisable as a laugh for, you know, being a panther and everything.

"Stark, meet May. May, this is Tony Stark. You've probably heard of him already, Iron Man, billionaire and a royal pain in the ass."

"Seriously? You're introducing me to a large cat?" he said with a smirk.

'_LARGE CAT?!' _I thought, and roared at him. ***For those who don't know what noise a panther makes, here you go: watch?v=ZfNiJqFNhF0***

Stark yelped, and jumped back. "Okay, that's a bit loud. And unnecessary" he said, and stared at me as I growled at him.

"You should be more careful of what you say, Stark. She can understand you perfectly" Hill said.

"Hmm, cool trick."

"Not a trick. She's human. Was. Something changed her into this, or someone."

"So, what, you're gonna keep her as a pet now? SHIELD's new mascot! Beautiful!"

A small smirk came on Fury's face, and said: "No. Actually, I want you to take her to your tower, and let her stay there until we figure out a way to change her back."

"What?!" he said, as your eyes widened. "Fury, perhaps you haven't noticed yet, but I don't really have the proper accommodation FOR A GOD DAMN PANTHER! No offense" he quickly said, and looked at me. I nodded, in a 'none taken' way.

"It's not open for discussion, Stark" Fury said, and looked at me. "You're going with him. We'll let you know if we find anything."

Great, he gave me the 'not open for discussion' look. That's just-terrific. So I just nodded while agent Hill unchained me, and walked towards Stark. He kept a close eye on me, and muttered: "You really had to take that chain offâ€¦?"

'_Aww, Is Iron Man afraid?' _I thought, and he noticed the amused look on my face.

As we started to walk towards the plane that would get us back to the ground, he said: "Don't look like that, you almost scared the f*** out of me back there." The amused expression didn't fade. "Almost. Anyway, once we arrive, I'll introduce you to the others. As in the other Avengers."

My eyes suddenly widened in realization. _'I'm going to live with the Avengers. Holy s***.' _Again, he noticed.

"Aww, is the kitty nervous?" he said, and instead of growling, I looked at him with a 'what do you think?' expression.

He laughed, and said: "Don't worry, you'll get your own floor." Then his eyes filled with mischief, a smirk spreading across his face. "Say, why don't we have some fun introducing you to them? I'd just love to see the expression on Barton's face when he meets you. Certainly as you give him the wonderful first expression you gave me a bit earlier."

'_Hell yeah! Bring it onâ€|' _I thought, and that same twinkle spread to my eyes.

He smiled at my reaction, and said: "_This _is going to be funâ€|"

3. Chapter 3

****May's POV****

Here we were, in front of Stark Tower. I stepped out of Tony's car â€"and Jesus Christ, _what a car_ and walked into the shadow of the huge building in front of me. Only a couple of days ago I wanted to go see it, but my friends didn't want to go see it. _'It's just a tower' _they said. Pfsh. Just a towerâ€| *mutter mutter* However, I _was _worried about my friends. They didn't know where I was, they couldn't reach me, and _oh no, my parents_! They'd be worried sick! I had to reach them! I had to-

"May?" Tony's voice snapped me out of my thoughts. "You okay?"

I realised that I had stopped walking and was just staring at the tower, so I nodded and continued to follow him. We entered the building and walked into a big hall, filled with some seats, but otherwise completely empty. Except for one red haired woman.

She turned around to face us, saying: "Tony, good, you're ba-AAAAAAH!"

"Pepper," he said calmly, "It's okay-"

"Okay?!" she shrieked, "OKAY?! YOU'VE BROUGHT A PANTHER TO STARK TOWER, THAT IS NOT OKAY! Jesus, Tony, you're giving me a heart attack!"

"No, really, it's okay! Fury said that I had to take her in for a while-"

"Then tell Fury he's got a problem because WE ARE NOT KEEPING A PANTHER."

'_Aww, c'mon, just give me a chance!' _I thought. But of course, I understood that keeping a panther isn't the most attractive scenario. New mission: convince Pepper.

I slowly walked to her, and she immediately stiffened. It was like she was afraid that if she moved I'd bite her or something. So I kept my head low, and when I had reached her, I gently pushed my nose against her hand.

"T-Tony, what is she doing?" she asked quietly.

He smiled and said: "She's trying to tell you that she likes you. If you'd let me finish, I would have told you that she's actually a human, named May, but changed into a panther. She isn't dangerous, just don't call her a cat. Or kitty. Or oversized pet. She doesn't like that."

She finally looked at me, and said: "Human, huh?"

I nodded, and poked her hand with my nose again. She gently started to pet me what made me purr.

"See? Not dangerous."

"Yeah, okay, fine. Sorry." I nodded again, to let her know that it was no problem.

"Jarvis, where's the rest?" Tony suddenly asked.

"Mr. Odinson is currently in Asgard, Mr. Banner is in the lab, Miss Romanoff is currently sparring with Mr. Rogers and Mr. Barton is plundering your kitchen at the moment" a voice replied. My eyes widened. I had heard about the AI, but didn't know he actually _existed._ That was so cool!

However, Tony growled. "May, how about we pay Barton a visit?" he said as he walked towards the elevator. I nodded and followed him.

"BE NICE" Pepper said as Tony pushed the button to his floor.

"We will" he said back, and the doors closed. Once the elevator started to move, he said: "Oh, we are so _not _going to be nice."

'_This is going to be fun' _I thought. When we reached his floor he told me to be quiet, and I nodded. We sneaked to his kitchen, and across the table, I saw a man standing against the counter with his back turned to us. He was humming and eating something. When I sniffed, I recognised the scent as ice cream. Tony grinned at me and nodded in Clint's direction. I grinned internally, the mischief shining in my eyes and got low, ready to jump. Tony stepped back quietly, and I wiggled my but a little, the way I had seen panthers doing in documentaries. Then I jumped over the table towards the poor man, roaring as loud as I could. The reaction was so pretty it would have won a beauty contest.

He screamed like a little girl, turning around and accidentally throwing the ice cream in the air. I landed right in front of him, causing him to fall back onto the floor, the ice cream landing on his head only a second later. Meanwhile, Tony was laughing his ass off in the doorway.

I couldn't hold it anymore and started to laugh as well â€"in my very own panther way, of course- and he just started to yell.

"TONY, WHAT THE HELL?!" It just made the billionaire laugh more. "YOU BOUGHT A PANTHER?!"

"May, meet Clint Barton, aka Hawkeye. Birdman, this is May. She was human, but turned into a panther for some strange, unknown reason. She's also staying with us for now. Fury's orders."

Clint growled. _'Oh boy, he hates me' _I thought. Trying to control the damage, I helped him get up.

"Oh, so now you're playing nice, huh?" he scoffed as he got up.

"Don't blame her, you shouldn't be stealing my Ben and Jerry's."

"Oh, so splattering it across my head is so much better?"

"Yes" Tony said, and started to laugh again. _'Okay, this I know for sure: stay around Tony, and things will never get boring' _I thought.

"Stop laughing" Clint said, and looked at me. "And to you: I am a master assassin. Don't. Ever. Do. That. Again." I shrugged. _'Fine.' _

"Next stop: Banner. But I wouldn't want to scare him like that. I don't want my lab destroyed by the Hulk. And you" he said as he turned to Clint, "stay out of my kitchen."

He turned away and I followed him, just hearing Clint whispering: "As if the company in this place wasn't strange enough. Now we've got a panther. That's just great."

When we stood in the elevator, Tony said: "But seriously, don't scare him, we don't want him to get angry. He's an awesome guy and stuff, but I wouldn't like to replace my lab. So I'll tell him, and call you when you can come in. It's not like he's about to break any second, but y'know, you're still a pantherâ€|" I nodded, and he smirked. "You're not that bad actually. You're pretty fun when you're not scaring the hell out of me."

Not it was my time to smirk. _'Aww, he likes me.' _The elevator stopped, and we entered the lab.

"Stay here" he said, and walked further into the lab. I sat down, and waited. I could hear some voices on the other side of the lab, and a bit later Tony called me. I sat up and walked towards where the voice came from. Arriving there, Tony introduced me to the man he was sitting next to. "Bruce, this is May. May, meet Bruce Banner. My

science bro."

I had an amused look on my face as I nodded to Bruce, and he nodded back.

"Nice to meet you" he said.

"Do you want to see the footage from when she met Clint?" Tony asked with a devilish grin.

"What did you do?" Bruce asked.

"Oh, you'll see" he said, and started the footage.

A minute later, Bruce was laughing with tears in his eyes. We all were, actually.

"What's so funny?" a woman's voice said. I turned around and saw a red head standing there. "Tony, is that a panther?" she asked unamused. "Does Pepper know you've bought one? Because she isn't going to like it."

"First of all" he started, "I didn't buy her. Fury said she has to stay here for a while. And then there's the fact that she isn't really a panther. She's a human, transformed into one."

She raised her eyebrow. "Really? A human transformed into a panther? And you expect me to believe that?"

"Yup. And her name is May, by the way."

"Bruce, do you honestly believe that?"

"Ehm, yeah. I mean, I was a bit sceptical about it at first, but you really should see the video of them introducing her to Clint. Priceless."

"You do that, while I'm going to introduce her to cap" Tony said, and the video started to play again while we walked towards the elevator.

"So, Captain America is next. I'm warning ya already, he can be a pain. But in the end, he's all right."

I nodded, and the elevator moved. When the doors opened, a scent of sweat immediately infiltrated my nose. _'Great' _I thought, _'the sports section. Guess where you are not going to find me during the time I'm staying here. Or at any point in my life, in fact.' _

"Hey capsicle! You down here?" Tony yelled through the oversized training room.

Walking into view, the super soldier answered: "Tony, how many time have I told you not to- JESUS CHRIST!" he yelped.

"Cap, meet May. May, meet Steve Rogers. Captain America, as you've probably already noticed. Steve, before you start to yell at me, this is not just a panther. She is "was- human, but got turned into, well, this" he said as gesturing to me. "Fury's still working on how all of this happened, but in the meantime, she's staying with us. So

be nice."

"Seriously? That's the best excuse you could come up with to get a mascot?" he said as he folded his arms.

'_Excuuuuuuuuuse me, but WHO are you calling a mascot?!' _I thought, and growled.

"Don't- just don't call her that. I called her a large cat when we first met, and I can still hear the high tone in my ears" Tony sighed. _'Ehehe,, my badâ€|' _"And if you don't believe me, you can always call Fury."

Steve looked at me, and sighed. "Well, I guess it's nice to meet you then" he said.

I nodded at him in return, and his eyes slightly widened in response. Then I looked up at Tony with questioning eyes. _'So, uhh, what now? '_

He frowned at me for a second, and then he said, "Dunno, I guess you can pick your own floor now. Everyone has one, so why not you? I guess I'll just have to tinker at the doors a little, but it'll be fine then."

My eyes widened as he said so. _'I'll get my own floor?! Awesome! '_

Meanwhile, Steve just asked: "How do you know what she was thinking?"

"It's not that hard" Tony explained, "she has very human facial expressions, even while being a panther. She laughs too y'know. In her own panther-ish way. It's adorable."

I glared at him. _'Do. Not. Call. Me. Adorable. I'm not. I'm a panther. Fear me.' _But instead he just started to laugh. _'Ah hell no!' _I thought, and jumped him, causing him to fall on his back. I stepped on him as soon as he touched the ground, focussing all of my weight on his shoulders so that he couldn't get back up. I growled a little, but that smirk just didn't come off his face.

"Aww, you're just too cute" he teased, scratching me underneath my chin.

'_Stop it!' _I thought, and shooed his hand away from me with my paw.

"Okay, that's enough you two" Steve interfered, and got me off of Tony. "And you told me to be nice."

He put me down as I continued to growl a little, and turned by back towards Tony. He just chuckled and said: "So, you wanna go see your own private floor now?" he asked tempting.

Damn. I really wanted to, but I was still in the middle of the process of being mad at him. So I glared at him, shortly nodded and walked past him towards the elevator as cocky as possible.

But in the process, I never stopped thinking: _'Call me adorable one

more time and I will kick. Your. Ass.' _

4. Chapter 4

****May's POV ****

After Tony had shown me around the tower completely and had given me my floor, we went to the common floor. Clint and Steve were there, watching some old cartoons. Pepper was there too, but she was on the phone. _'Hmm, busy woman' _I thought. Tony went to the bar straight away, pouring himself a drink.

Pepper hung up, and said: "May, I just ordered some stuff for you. You know, practical things, like a big scratching pole and some other things like that. They'll be here in a hour, and we'll put them on your floor. Sounds good?"

I nodded and smiled in a grateful way. _'I'll have a scratching pole, cool' _I thought, and pulled my claws in and out carefully. _'Sweet.' _A snicker came from the couch, and I saw two huge smiles on Clint and Steve's faces. Wanting to join them, I walked towards the couch. But before I jumped on, I suddenly changed my mind. _'Am I even allowed to sit on the couch?' _I wondered, and glanced at Pepper.

She saw me looking at her and asked: "What's the matter?"

I looked at the couch and then back to her, hoping she got the hint. She did.

"Oh, ehm, I don't know Mayâ€¦ I don't want to be a pain or anything, but it's leatherâ€¦"

Shrugging it off, I went to lay down next to the couch- if I wasn't interrupted by Steve, saying "Hold on, I've got something."

He walked over to a closet, and pulled out a blanket. He grinned and laid it on the couch, right next to where he sat. "Here you go" he said, and tapped on the blanket while sitting back down. I smiled, and jumped on. I briefly pushed my head against his arm and he smiled.

"No problem" he said.

I laid there for hours, the stuff Pepper had ordered had arrived, and I was slowly starting to daze off. Just when I was about to fall asleep, a loud voice boomed across the room.

"BROTHERS! HOW GOOD IT IS TO SEE YOU ALL AGAIN!"

I yelped, and fell from the couch, making Tony and Clint laugh. I hissed a little, and rubbed my ears. _'How on Earth can one person make that much noise?!' _

"Now you know how I felt" Clint said, and I rolled my eyes.

"What is this?" the man said, a bit less loud. A bit.

"That" Tony said, "is May. Used to be human, but somehow turned into

a panther. May, this is Thor."

"It is an honour to meet you, Lady May" he smiled. He bowed his head a little, and I returned the gesture. But soon the sleep started to become more demanding, so I yawned, and slowly walked to the elevator.

"You going to bed?" Tony asked. I nodded, and leaned on my back legs so that I could press the button.

"Goodnight" Steve said, and around the same came from the others. The doors opened and I walked in, pressing the button for my floor. The doors closed, only to open a bit later revealing the hallway of my own floor. I was doing my best not to fall asleep in the middle of the hallway. So when I finally reached my bed and jumped on, I immediately fell in a deep sleep.

oOoOoOo

_That scent. It was everywhere. I wanted to get away, get rid of it, leave it behind me and run. Run as fast as I could. But the more I tried to move, the more I struggled, the more intense the scent became, until it became like a thick fog around me. It penetrated my nose and throat, and started to smother me. _

'_N- no, stopâ€¦|' I heard myself whimper. _

_A laugh was heard around me. It was a dark laugh, making your blood run cold. Ice cold. _

_Was it my blood, or was it really getting colder? _

_Meanwhile, the fog was twisting and turning around my neck and legs. It was binding me, overwhelming me and hurting me. Seriously hurting me. The type of feeling you get when your hand is stuck in ice. Like needles penetrating your skin. But instead of going numb, it only got worse. _

_Laughter was heard again. 'S- stop! Please!' I tried to yell, but choked on my words. _

Pain raged through my body, and just when I thought I couldn't hold it anymore, I saw a flash and everything stopped.

oOoOoOo

****Steve's POV****

I couldn't sleep. Not that I needed that much sleep anyway. So I stood up and got dressed, putting on some clothes to work out. When I went to my kitchen to get something to drink first, I was interrupted by J.A.R.V.I.S..

"_Sir" _the A.I. said, _"there seems to be something wrong with miss May." _

"What do you mean?" I asked, as I was already heading towards the elevator.

"_It appears as if she is having a very violent nightmare. Her pulse is getting dangerously high."_

"I'm on my way," I said, as I pressed the button to her floor. When the doors opened, I immediately went towards her bedroom. Not bothering to knock the door I walked in, finding her wrestling in her sleep, hissing, growling and breathing fast.

"May, wake up" I said, and sat on the side of her bed while shaking her shoulders a bit. "Come on May, wake up!"

Her eyes flashed open, and she looked around completely confused and upset. Then her eyes found mine and I noticed she was crying.

"Hey shhh, it's alright" I said. "It was just a dream." She moved closer to me, crawling in a ball against my chest, tears still streaming down her face. I was surprised at first, but quickly laid my hands around her shoulders, holding her close. I didn't know her that well, but you didn't need to in order to see that she needed comfort. "It's all right" I whispered, "I'm here. You're safe now, no need to worry anymore, okay?"

I kept comforting her like this for a couple of minutes, until I noticed her falling asleep again. Before her eyes closed, she looked up at me. I smiled at her and said: "It's okay, you just get some rest. I'll stay right here with you, okay?" She smiled at me, before laying down her head again and dozing off.

5. Chapter 5

OH GOD I'M SO SORRY. I can't believe how long it took me to write this short teeny tiny chapter. I'm already working on the next one though, so I hope that one will be finished sooner.

May's POV

That nightmare hadn't been the last one. It only seemed to haunt me, and I was losing a lot of sleep. Meanwhile, two weeks had passed by, and I still hadn't heard anything from S.H.I.E.L.D.. That was, until today. I was sitting on the couch with Thor- who in my humble opinion was freaking awesome- and Bruce- who made me feel stupid all the time, being the genius he was- when Natasha walked in.****

"Hey, May, Fury's here. He wants to speak with you" she said. My head perked up, and I followed her immediately. She opened the elevator, and pushed the button to the 'meeting' floor. When the elevator started to move, she finally broke the silence. ****

"Fury's got you a typing pad, so that you can tell him things as well. I don't know if he's found much, but I do know that we've managed to locate your friends and family, and we've let them know that you're okay." ****

I gave her a thankful look; the matter had been worrying me for a while now. 'I just hope they aren't worrying too much' I hoped.****

"So," she started again, "how are you holding up?" she asked. I looked at her with worry and tiredness in my eyes and she immediately

understood. Her lips twitched into a comforting smile, it was only for a small second, but it was there. "You'll be fine" she tried to comfort me a little, putting on a hopeful façade. ****

But somewhere down, we both knew that two weeks was a long time, and my chances were shrinking every second.****

'Let's just hope Fury's got something.'****

oOoOoOo****

"We've got nothing."****

DAMNIT.

"Seriously? Absolutely nothing?" Tony quirked his eyebrow. He had insisted on attending our little meeting- much to Fury's annoyance- because, and I'm quoting: "Technically it's my tower, so I'm the one giving you permission to attend my meeting, and not the other way around." Now back to said meeting.****

"Listen, this is unlike anything we've ever seen. Unless you can either give me something to compare this to, or remember something, we've hit a dead end."****

Though I didn't want to bring them up, I knew that the nightmares might be able to help. Maybe. So I typed the words "nightmares. Always the same" and Fury's attention immediately drew back to me.****

"How long have you been having those?" the director asked.****

"As long as she's been here" Tony answered for me. "Cap' was the first one to notice, and when they didn't stop, he told us."****

"Okay, and what are they about?"****

I started typing again. "Thick, green smoke. Smothering, cold, pain. Like ice, needles. And a laugh. Then I wake up." I shivered at the thought, and looked away. I was getting more tired every day, and it began to show.****

"Honestly, that doesn't give us much either. But we'll check if there's something- or someone- who we can relate to this" Fury said. "In the meantime, keep the typing pad. Might come in handy."****

I nodded, and Tony asked: "Are we done?"****

Fury nodded, looked at me one last time, and left. I felt like I could cry. Two weeks it had been, and they had found absolutely nothing. Dispirited, I walked to the elevator. When the door opened and I walked in, Tony asked: "You okay?"****

I simply shook my head, and the doors closed.****

oOoOoOo****

Tony's POV

May looked absolutely devastated after she heard the news. Jesus Christ, they had found absolutely nothing. If I had turned into a panther and Fury hadn't found anything in two damn weeks, I'd- ehm- I'd have no idea what I'd do. And May looked exactly like that. "Poor kidâ€¦" I muttered.****

"Did you say something?" Natasha said. Huh, forgot she was still here.****

"No, nothing. It's just that I'm sorry for May. She had a decent, normal life, and then someone goes changing her into a panther. And I just don't see why. Was it out of revenge, for something that she did? Because I don't see her making enemies like that. So what was it then? Did they use her as a test subject?"****

"Hmm, unlikely. If it were a test, they would have kept her, no matter who it might have been. You want to keep a close eye on your 'prototype', or however you want to call it" she said casually.****

Than what else could it have been? It couldn't just have been for fun. Because you'd have to be a real pain in the ass to do something like that. That isn't just a trick. That mischief at its worst-"****

Our eyes grew wide as they realised what I was saying.****

"You know, I'd call him a son of a bitch again, but Thor told me Frigga is a really nice woman. So out of respect for her, I won't. But SERIOUSLY? J.A.R.V.I.S., call Fury back, NOW." ****

"Of course, sir" he answered immediately. A few moments later, the doors of the elevator opened again. ****

"Did you miss me already?" Fury said with a small smirk.****

"Shut it, Nicholas. This is serious." _'Seriously, then they say I'm full of myself.'_ In the corner of my eye, I could see Natasha trying to hide a grin. ****

"First of all, don't. Ever. Call. Me. That. Again" Fury started. "Next, if it's serious, then talk. What's going on?"****

"I think I figured out who did this to May. It's not that hard to figure out, actually. Think about it, she's not a testing subject, because she's not being observed. And I doubt it's personal, given that she doesn't know anyone who could do this. So what if it's just for fun? And who do we know with enough tricks in their head to pull something like this off?"****

Fury narrowed his eyes, in a 'get to the point or I'll snap your neck'-way.****

"God, Fury are you really that thick? It's Loki."

oOoOoOo

**Okay, for those who had the idea it was Loki, you can officially pat yourselves on the back! (But watch out: make sure you don't

sprain anything.）**

6. Chapter 6

**May's POV **

Back in the lounge room I saw that Clint and Steve had joined Bruce and Thor, and I laid the typing pad on the coffee table. Getting on the couch (on my blanket, I wasn't going to give Pepper a heart attack thank you very much), I sat between Clint and Bruce.

"Hey May, what's that?" Steve asked, motioning towards the device.

"Typing pad" Clint answered for me. I looked at him with my head tilted and question in my eyes. _'How did he know that?'_

He simply shrugged and said: "Fury told me."

After that we all sat in silence, watching some strange programme on the television. No-one asked a thing about the meeting- either they knew from the look on my 'face' that there hadn't been any good news, or they had already been informed. No word was said- until Tony burst in with Natasha and Fury right after him.

"MayMayMayMayMayMayMAY!" he yelled. My head popped up and looked at him in a 'why the freaking doodle do you have to be so loud'-way. He ignored the look and kept on rambling.

"We have a pretty good idea who it was that transformed you well I say we but I actually mean I because well I'm a genius but anyway I was thinking about what the motives might have been to do this to you and first I thought it might have been out of revenge you know for something you might have done to someone but then I realised that" *BREATHE* "you probably don't know anyone who could transform you into a PANTHER because normal people don't do that and then I thought you might be a test but that wouldn't be logical either because you want to keep a close eye on your test subject so that possibility was scratched off the list too so I really had no idea what the motive was until I said that there had to be a motive" *BREATHE* "but what if there wasn't a motive you know what if they just did this to amuse themselves and I know it seems awful that anyone would actually do something like that but we kinda know a guy who could pull this off and is twisted enough to do this for fun and everything adds up like the things in your dreams with the cold and the green smoke and stuff and honestly I have no ideawhyIhaven'tthoughtaboutitbeforebutI'mprettysureit'sLOKI!" *BREATHE*

No-one else understood what all the rambling had been about, but I had followed every word he had said. I was going to go into a hyper state of happiness- before it was cut off by a "What just happened" by Steve.

Natasha sighed, and said: "We found out who did this to her: Loki. We're not completely sure, but the chances are pretty big."

"Thank you" Steve said, right before Tony started talking again- this time on a more normal tempo.

"So all we have to do is let you hear his voice and then you can confirm whether it's him or not. You think you can do that?" I nodded, and the billionaire immediately started to command his AI. "J.A.R.V.I.S., play the footage from my 'friendly' conversation with Loki during the battle of Manhattan."

"Playing, sir" he simply responded, and a scene started to play on the television.

"-and you, you've managed to piss off every single one of them" _I heard Tony say. He was standing behind his bar- as usual- and was talking to a man with black hair wearing black, green and golden robes. The camera angle allowed me to see his face, and the eyes stood out immediately. _'I know those eyes' _I thought. But I was sure it had been him when his voice echoed through the room.

"That was the plan." _A shiver went down my spine, and made me feel paralysed. All I could do was watch the footage in front of me.

"Not a great plan. When they come- and they will- they'll come for you." _

"I have an army." _

"We have a Hulk." _

"What, the beast that wandered off?" _

"You're missing the point, there is no throne. There is no version of this where you come out on top. Maybe your army comes and maybe it's too much for us but it's all on you. 'Cause if we can't protect the earth you can be damn sure we'll avenge it." _

"How can your friends have time for me when they're so busy fighting you?" _I heard a strange noise, and saw Loki press his sceptre against Tony- his arc reactor to be precise. A clang could be heard, and he tried again. I didn't know what was supposed to happen, but I was sure it was something more than that. _"This usually works."

_

"Well, performance issues, not uncommon. One out of- urgh!" _Loki had taken him by the throat and threw him to the ground.

"J.A.R.V.I.S., any time now." _He struggled to get back up, but tall dark and creepy had him by his throat again.

"You'll all fall before me." _And just like that, he was thrown out of the window. But something flew out of the window right after him, and only a moment later Tony was flying outside of the building in his Iron Man suit.

"And there's one other person you pissed off. His name was Phil." _The last we saw was Tony blasting Loki, and then the screen went black. I stared to the screen for a few more seconds, frozen, until Tony came to stand next to me.

"So, is that him?" he softly asked. I nodded, only brief at first,

but then more clearly.

Thor grumbled. "Out of all people, why did he have to be the one to do this to lady May?"

"I'll see if I can locate him somewhere, I can't promise anything, but at least now we know what- or who- we're looking for" Fury said, and walked off. Once the elevator doors had closed behind him, I collapsed on the floor, covering my face with my paws. _'Why him, why him, why hihihiiiiimâ€|' _I sobbed in my head. I didn't know what I expected after that, but it certainly wasn't that amused voice saying _'Just because I can.' _Because that was _exactly_ what happened. My head shot up, but no-one seemed to have heard that voice. _'Okay, okay, just relax, your mind is just playing tricks on you. It's probably because of the lack of sleep'_ I tried to calm myself.

But the laugh that rang in my ears was most certainly not helping.

7. Chapter 7

****May's POV****

This was officially the worst day in my life. You could think it would have been the one where I changed into a panther, but no. This was way worse.

_ 'Fuck my life. As in: FUCK. MY. LIFE. It's bad enough that I'm changed into a panther, but this? This is just cruel. I don't want to live like this anymoreâ€|' _I thought.

I almost started to sob, giving Tony my best puppy eyes (or kitten eyes, whatever), but he reluctantly shook his head.

"No, May. And pouting won't help either. This stuff can make you blind, you know!"

_ 'But it's chocolaahahahaateâ€|' _I thought, and pouted more.

"I said no. What do I have to do to make you listen to me?"

"Forget it, Tony, she ain't gonna listen" Clint said. "You've been at this for fifteen minutes now, you'll have to tie her up in your lab before she's gonna leave the chocolate stash alone."

"Then at least can I have a cookie?" I typed.

"NO" Tony almost yelled.

_ 'Sonofafreakingfuckfacegoddamnitgofuckyourselfyoulittlepieceofshizzleâ€|' _I thought as I stalked away.

"She isn't going to let this go, is she?" Tony asked.

"Pfsh, what do you think?"

oOoOoOo

_"Avengers, assemble" _a voice rang through the tower. Tony's voice, to be precise. _"This is gonna be a quick one guys, just in and out."

—

Looking up, Clint groaned. He stalked away, but not before pointing at me, saying "be good." I waved him off- or at least, attempted to- and he continued his way to the elevator.

_'Okay, I haven't got much time' _I thought once he had left, _'time to find the food.' _

On a now very important mission, I sneaked my way into the kitchen. Sniffing the air a couple of times, I knew where the chocolate-chip cookies were stored and internally smirked. '_Victory. I's so close nowâ€|' _The only down part was that Tony had put them in the upper cabinet, so that I couldn't reach them. _'Hmm. Watch me.' _

I jumped on the table, only slipping a little bit. Next I hopped on the counter, where I balanced myself on my back paws. Reaching for the cabinet, I was doing my best not to fall over, and even if I say so myself, I was doing a damn good job, until a loud voice rang through the air.

_"MAYBELLE BOSLEY! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!" _Tony yelled. Cue me falling back on the ground with a loud thud.

Whining loudly, I got back up.

_"Well that's what you get! For the last damn time; NO CHOCOLATE. NO COOKIES. IF YOU'RE HUNGRY, EAT YOUR DAMN MEAT!" _

He hung up, muttering something about _'why did Fury think this was a good idea. Sure, let's dump the panther with Starkâ€|' _ etcetera.

I stalked back to the couch. When I got there I laid back down, until a familiar scent reached my nose. _'Seriously? Now everything smells like cookies? That's just mean' _I thought. However, when I lifted my head a bit, I noticed the scent came from somewhere else.

The vents.

Oh Clint, you sneaky bastard.

Jumping a few closets, I managed to get into the vent. _'Oh yeah, it's definitely coming from the vents' _I thought as I sniffed the air once more. Praying that I wouldn't get stuck, I crawled through the narrow passages while following My nose. Left, right, right again, going down a bit and around some more corners, I finally found it.

Hallelujah, food.

I scratched at the packaging and opened the box of cookies, too eager to wait any longer. In my pure happiness and delight I unfortunately didn't hear the approaching bird behind me.

"Fuck May! That's my food!" he said.

_'That _was _your food. Too bad' _I thought.

He grabbed you by the neck and dragged you out of the vents, back into the common living room.

"Found her" he said.

"She was in the vents?" Tony said, quirking his eyebrow. "What was she doing there?" His question was answered when he saw me licking off my face. He sighed. "Clintâ€¦ Did you keep a secret food stash in the vents again?"

"...

No."

"CLINT."

"Well 'sorry', but it's not my fault that ThOR KEEPS EATING ALL THE DAMN COOKIES IN THE TOWER."

"WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO WTH THIS?"

"YOU DO EAT EVERYTHING IN THE TOWER."

"QUIET, SPANGLES."

"HEY, THAT'S _MY_ NICKNAME FOR HIM!"

"NOBODY CAN USE THAT NICKNAME"

"FINE, CAPSICLE."

"FOR THE LAST DAMN TIME, FIND YOUR OWN DAMN NICKNAMES."

"WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT, TIN MAN!?"

"WELL I MIGHT JUST KISK YOUR ASS, BIRDBRAIN."

"NO-ONE IS KICKING ANYONES BEHIND, _ANTHONY_."

"DON'T YOU CALL ME THAT, _STEVEN_."

"I'LL CALL YOU HOWEVER I WANT."

"THEN DON'T WHINE WHEN WE GIVE YOU NICKNAMES."

"I'M GIVING NICKNAMES, YOU JUST COPY THEM YOU â€œ"

"How long is it going to take this time?" Natasha asked Bruce.

"Hard to say, given that Steve's entered the argument this time. We'll see" he answered while looking at me lying contently on the ground, absent-minded and rubbing my belly.

End
file.